

EXECUTIVE SESSION
PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE,
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
WASHINGTON, D.C.

INTERVIEW OF: EVELYN FARKAS

Monday, June 26, 2017

Washington, D.C.

The interview in the above matter was held in Room HVC-304, the Capitol, commencing at 4:16 p.m.

Present: Representatives Gowdy, Rooney, Heck, Speier, Quigley, Himes, and Swalwell.

Appearances:

For the PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

For EVELYN FARKAS:

ALEX T. HASKELL, ESQ.

SKADDEN, ARPS, SLATE, MEAGHER & FLOM LLP

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[REDACTED] Good afternoon. This is a transcribed interview of Dr. Evelyn Farkas.

Thank you for speaking to us today.

For the record, I am [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and staff member at the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. Also present today from HPSCI -- and we'll just kick it down the row -- are?

MR. GOWDY: Trey Gowdy.

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

MR. SCHIFF: Adam Schiff.

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

MR. QUIGLEY: Mike Quigley.

MR. HIMES: Jim Himes.

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Thank you.

Before we begin, I wanted to state a few things for the record. The questioning will be conducted by Members and staff. During the course of this interview, Members and staff may ask questions during their allotted time period. Some questions may seem basic, but that's because we need to clearly establish facts and understand the situation.

Please do not assume we know any facts you have previously disclosed as part of any other investigation or interview.

During the course of this interview, we will take any breaks that you desire.

There is a reporter making a record of these proceedings, so we can easily

consult a written compilation of your answers. The reporter may ask you to spell certain terms or unusual phrases you might use and may ask you to slow down or repeat your answers. We ask that you give complete and fulsome replies to questions based on your best recollections.

If a question is unclear, or you are uncertain in your response, please let us know. And if you do not know the answer to a question or cannot remember, simply say so.

You are entitled to have a lawyer present for this interview, but you are not required to do so. I understand that -- and I'll ask Alex to introduce himself, please.

MR. HASKELL: This is Alex Haskell, attorney for Evelyn Farkas.

██████████ Thank you. And he is present today for you.

The interview will be transcribed. Because the reporter cannot record gestures, we ask that you answer verbally. If you forget to do this, you might be reminded to do so.

You may also be asked to spell certain terms or unusual phrases. Consistent with the committee's rules of procedures, you or you -- excuse me. You and your counsel, if you wish, will have a reasonable opportunity to inspect the transcript of this interview in order to determine whether your answers were correctly transcribed. The transcript will remain in the committee's custody. The committee also reserves the right to request your return for additional questions should the need arise.

The process for the interview is as follows: The majority will be given 45 minutes to ask questions, then the minority will be given 45 minutes to ask questions. Members have been designated per side.

Immediately thereafter, we will take a 5-minute break, after which, the

majority will be given 15 minutes to ask questions, and the minority will be given 15 minutes to ask questions. These limits will be strictly adhered to by all sides with no extensions being granted. Time will be kept for each portion of the interview with warnings given at the 5-minute and 1-minute mark respectively.

To ensure confidentiality, we ask that you do not discuss the interview with anyone other than your attorney.

Our record today will reflect that you have not been compelled to appear. I remind you that it is unlawful to deliberately provide false information to Members of Congress or staff.

Lastly, the record will reflect that you are voluntarily participating in this interview, which is under oath.

Dr. Farkas, do you understand these circumstances?

MS. FARKAS: I do.

██████████ Thank you.

Mr. Gowdy.

MR. GOWDY: Good afternoon, Dr. Farkas.

MS. FARKAS: Good afternoon.

MR. GOWDY: I'm going to ask you a series of questions about an interview you had on MSNBC on March the 2nd, 2017. Are you familiar with that interview?

MS. FARKAS: Not -- just with the date.

MR. GOWDY: You are familiar with the interview but not the date?

MS. FARKAS: I'm not -- not with that little information. Sir which program was it.

MR. GOWDY: MSNBC.

MS. FARKAS: Right. But I'm frequently on MSNBC, so I need more

information.

MR. GOWDY: It was Morning Joe. And I am happy to stop the clock and let you read the transcript if you think that would make you more familiar with it?

MS. FARKAS: I'm guessing which one it is, because I think there was only one Morning Joe that you are interested in, correct?

MR. GOWDY: We're just going to start with this one.

MS. FARKAS: Okay.

MR. GOWDY: I don't know how many other Members are interested in other interviews.

MS. FARKAS: Okay. You can proceed, and then if it sounds unfamiliar, I will let you know.

MR. GOWDY: All right. And if you don't agree with my understanding of the transcript of what you said, I need you to let me know. Okay.

MS. FARKAS: I will.

MR. GOWDY: You began by saying, I was urging my former colleagues. Do you remember that?

MS. FARKAS: Yes, I remember this interview.

MR. GOWDY: Who were you referring to as your former colleagues?

MS. FARKAS: In that context, I was referring to former colleagues from the Hill, I believe.

MR. GOWDY: Such as?

MS. FARKAS: Can you read the whole quote?

██████████ Do you have a copy?

MS. FARKAS: Because I go back and forth in there between who my former colleagues are.

MR. GOWDY: Does your lawyer have a copy of the --

MR. HASKELL: Yeah. If you give a moment --

MS. FARKAS: So in some cases it's my former colleagues from the Hill, in some cases it's my former colleagues from the executive branch.

MR. GOWDY: That's what I want to ask you.

MS. FARKAS: Yeah. So in this case, in the beginning of the quote, I was urging my former colleagues and, frankly, speaking to people on the Hill, I was referring to people that I had spoken to on the Hill that I had worked with before or in organizations where I had worked before.

MR. GOWDY: Such as whom?

MS. FARKAS: People who worked for the Senate Armed Services Committee and the House Armed Services Committee.

MR. GOWDY: How about names? I was actually looking for the names of people that you spoke to.

MS. FARKAS: Sure. I spoke to [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I spoke to [REDACTED] Do you want me to tell you who they are or --

MR. GOWDY: Huh-uh.

MS. FARKAS: Okay. I spoke to [REDACTED] [REDACTED] -- [REDACTED] [REDACTED], and that's it.

MR. GOWDY: Those are -- only those four?

MS. FARKAS: Uh-huh.

MR. GOWDY: What did you mean by urging, urging my former colleagues?

MS. FARKAS: I was urging them to make sure that they had all the information regarding what Russia had done in the context much our elections and to find out from the Obama administration everything they knew about that,

including whether there was any collusion with --

MR. GOWDY: We are going to get to that part. I was just focusing on the word urging.

MS. FARKAS: Okay. Yes. So I was urging them to get -- to request information from the Obama White House, from the administration.

MR. GOWDY: All right. And then you said, I was urging my former colleagues, and frankly speaking, the people on the Hill. Is your testimony those were two separate groups?

MS. FARKAS: No, they're not. So what I was doing was clarifying for the viewer that what I was pointing to were people on the Hill.

MR. GOWDY: Where did you work after you worked on the Hill?

MS. FARKAS: After I worked on the Hill -- well, I worked for an independent commission, which was created by Congress, so technically, that was still -- those independent it was reported to Congress, so it was leg. branch, I believe. And then from there I took a think tank interm esto, I call it, with the American Security Project. After that I was hired to work for Admiral I was hired to work for Admiral Stavridis at the U.S. European Command, and then after that I went to work in the policy office in the Department of Defense.

So I worked 20 years in Washington out of a 30-year career in foreign policy. Most of it -- so the 20 years was in government except for that little American Security Project.

MR. GOWDY: When you say colleagues, you're exclusively referring to former colleagues on the Hill?

MS. FARKAS: At that point in that sentence, yes.

MR. GOWDY: All right. And then you said it was more aimed at telling the

Hill people, get as much information as you can. What did you mean by, it? It was more aimed at.

MS. FARKAS: Oh, it, meaning urging.

MR. GOWDY: How were they supposed to get that information?

MS. FARKAS: They're supposed to request it.

MR. GOWDY: From whom?

MS. FARKAS: From the administration.

MR. GOWDY: Any agencies in particular?

MS. FARKAS: No. It was actually not specific.

MR. GOWDY: How did you communicate with your former colleagues?

MS. FARKAS: I came up to the Hill.

MR. GOWDY: No email conversations, no email track record?

MS. FARKAS: Only to request the meetings.

MR. GOWDY: No telephone conversations?

MS. FARKAS: No.

MR. GOWDY: All of them in person?

MS. FARKAS: Uh-huh.

MR. GOWDY: And you were urging your former Hill colleagues to get as much information as they could. And by, information, you mean what?

MS. FARKAS: By, information, I meant they should get all of the -- whatever the Obama administration knew about the Russian involvement in our elections, classified and unclassified.

MR. GOWDY: And did you tell them how to go about getting it, or did you just assume that they knew?

MS. FARKAS: I assumed they knew.

MR. GOWDY: Did you still have a security clearance at the time?

MS. FARKAS: Yes.

MR. GOWDY: Did you tell them in particular what to ask for?

MS. FARKAS: No.

MR. GOWDY: Did you tell them what agencies to make the request of?

MS. FARKAS: No. No.

MR. GOWDY: Was the information you wanted them to request classified?

MS. FARKAS: Not necessarily.

MR. GOWDY: What information in particular at that point -- when were these conversations taking place?

MS. FARKAS: In December of 2016.

MR. GOWDY: And what information in particular did you want them -- were you urging them to request?

MS. FARKAS: I didn't know. So there was no specific information I wanted them to request.

MR. GOWDY: Well, we'll get to that in a minute. There was nothing specific? You just generally told your former colleagues, get as much information about Russia as you possibly can?

MS. FARKAS: Exactly.

MR. GOWDY: What prompted you to do that?

MS. FARKAS: I was -- as I mentioned in the press, I was very concerned based on the media reporting that Congress was not fully aware of everything the White House might be aware of.

MR. GOWDY: What specific media reporting are you referring to?

MS. FARKAS: I can't point to anything specific, but there are a lot of media

reports, lot of stories about the hacking of the DNC and of John Podesta, the Hillary Clinton campaign, and then the transfer of that information to WikiLeaks. So a lot of stories about that, and many other things that caused me to be concerned.

MR. GOWDY: So the information you were urging your former colleagues to see was -- it was already in the public domain?

MS. FARKAS: No. It was stuff -- it was based on what I heard in the public domain. Meaning, I heard enough in the public domain to suspect that there was more that the public didn't know but that Congress certainly should know.

MR. GOWDY: Well, how did you know at the time Congress didn't know about it?

MS. FARKAS: I didn't.

MR. GOWDY: So you were telling me that might already know about it to go make sure that they knew about it?

MS. FARKAS: That's a possibility.

MR. GOWDY: Is it a possibility or is that what you were doing? You're the one that did it.

MS. FARKAS: I didn't know.

MR. GOWDY: Did you ask them to go contact the FBI?

MS. FARKAS: No.

MR. GOWDY: Did you ask them why the DNC didn't turn the server over to the FBI?

MS. FARKAS: No.

MR. GOWDY: Any agencies in particular you wanted them to contact?

MS. FARKAS: No.

MR. GOWDY: Did you have any information connecting the --

MS. FARKAS: I probably said the White House. That was about as specific as I might have gotten.

MR. GOWDY: Did you have information connecting the Trump campaign to the hack of the DNC?

MS. FARKAS: No.

MR. GOWDY: What were they supposed to ask for?

MS. FARKAS: As I said, anything -- they were supposed to ask for a briefing. If they weren't being briefed -- so that was my basic message, if you are not being fully briefed and you're not fully paying attention to this, you should, because my gut tells me that the White House must know more.

MR. GOWDY: Well, in that sentence you said it was more into telling people on the Hill to get as much information as you can, and then you said get as much intelligence as you can. What's the difference between the two to you?

MR. HASKELL: Can you point to where she said she must get as much intelligence as she can?

MR. GOWDY: Yep. Is that -- more actually aimed at telling people on the Hill to get as much information as you can, get as much intelligence as you can before President Obama leaves the administration.

MS. FARKAS: Yeah. There's nothing about intelligence in that. Is this in the Morning Joe?

MR. GOWDY: Uh-huh.

MR. HASKELL: From that exact interview, we don't have as much intelligence in the transcript.

MS. FARKAS: It just says, information.

MR. GOWDY: Well, Adam, we got to where we can stop and let them watch

the video so she can hear what she said. Because if she doesn't think she said intelligence, then I'm wasting my time asking her about it.

MR. SCHIFF: Well, I don't know where your question is coming from, so I don't know --

MR. GOWDY: Coming from a transcript of her interview with Morning Joe on --

MR. SCHIFF: Do you have -- are you looking at the transcript?

MR. HASKELL: We are looking at the transcript. It's certainly possible that our transcript is missing, where I'm not sure, material.

MS. FARKAS: Do you want me to read this?

MR. HASKELL: We have a transcript, as do you. Our transcript doesn't have intelligence. Our transcript might be incorrect, so --

MR. GOWDY: And mine might be too. And if she didn't say intelligence, then it doesn't do me good to me to ask her about it. But if she did say, intelligence, then I'd like to know why she used the, word information and then used the word, intelligence.

MR. HASKELL: Totally understand. I defer --

MR. GOWDY: Do you want to stop the clock and go watch the interview on a computer?

MR. HASKELL: I think before she answers the question based on a transcript we are unclear about that would make sense.

MR. GOWDY: I don't want her answering a question about something she didn't say.

MR. HASKELL: Right --

MR. SCHIFF: Trey, does it make sense, in the interest of time, do we want

to have our staff watch that while we continue the interview, or --

MR. GOWDY: I don't know if she's going to take staff's word for it anymore than she's going to take my word for what she said.

MR. SCHIFF: No, but you are going to take your staff word for it if what you have isn't the accurate representation. I don't know, but if it is, then we should find out, but --

MS. FARKAS: I'm happy to go to the next question --

MR. GOWDY: I appreciate that.

MS. FARKAS: -- or the underlying question.

MR. GOWDY: I appreciate that. But I want an answer to that question before I go to the next question.

MS. FARKAS: Fair enough.

██████████ We have a copy of what we believe is the pertinent excerpt. If you would like, we can offer it into the record.

MR. GOWDY: Does it have the word, intelligence in it?

██████████ I'll let you will look at it.

MR. GOWDY: It does have the word intelligence in it, so --

MR. HASKELL: I read that our transcript maybe wrong, and I'm happy to --

MR. GOWDY: Well, I need her to be certain what she said, or else I'm wasting her time and wasting yours too.

MS. FARKAS: So later in the paragraph, I say, meaning we no longer have access to that intelligence.

MR. GOWDY: That's what I want to get at. Get as much information as you can, get as much intelligence as you can. One call is following immediately after the other.

MR. HASKELL: May I have a moment?

MR. GOWDY: Yes.

[Discussion off the record.]

MR. HASKELL: So we will take your word for it that our transcript is wrong in that regard, and she will -- assuming that intelligence is in there, if we can do --

MS. FARKAS: It doesn't make a difference to me. I wanted them to get --

MR. HASKELL: So we'll assume the intelligence is in there, and you can proceed with your questions. I apologize for that.

MR. GOWDY: All right.

You used the word, information, and then you changed to the word, intelligence. What's the difference between the two?

MS. FARKAS: Information is unclassified. Intelligence is classified.

MR. GOWDY: So you wanted them to get as much unclassified information and as much classified information as they could?

MS. FARKAS: Correct. Them being people on the Hill who were cleared for it.

MR. GOWDY: And, again, just to be clear for my colleague who just walked in, the information in intelligence you wanted them to get was about what?

MS. FARKAS: Anything the Obama administration knew about the Russian interference in our elections.

MR. GOWDY: And you wanted them to get that information, Tom for your purposes, because you had seen media reports on it?

MS. FARKAS: In part, yes.

MR. GOWDY: What was the other part? What's the other part?

MS. FARKAS: The other part is that for 3 years -- well, so as I mentioned

before, I have 30 years in the field, 20 years working in the national security arena, most of it for the government, and 3 years working intensely on Russia, and every bone in my body told me that this was a highly -- that this was probably the tip of the iceberg. Knowing how the Russians operate, there had to be more to this story, and I wanted to make sure that Congress knew everything the Obama administration knew.

MR. GOWDY: Given your expertise in Russia, why did you wait until December to ask them to get the information? Had Russia interfered with our elections in the past?

MS. FARKAS: Okay. That's two questions.

MR. GOWDY: So you can take whatever one you want.

MS. FARKAS: So have Russia interfered in our elections in the past? Not to my knowledge. Had -- the first question was why did it take me until December?

MR. GOWDY: Yes.

MS. FARKAS: Because, as I said in other statements, I got the feeling based on observing Members of Congress, staff in the press, the things that people were saying, I didn't sense sufficient concern.

MR. GOWDY: When was the hack at the DNC?

MS. FARKAS: Sorry?

MR. GOWDY: When was the hack at the DNC?

MS. FARKAS: I don't know, because I was -- I don't know anything except what's in the newspapers about the DNC hack, and it was somewhere before the convention, but I don't know when.

MR. GOWDY: And the convention was --

MS. FARKAS: Somewhere before the Democrat convention in July.

MR. GOWDY: And the convention was what month?

MS. FARKAS: July.

MR. GOWDY: So why didn't you ask in August that they get as much information as they could?

MS. FARKAS: I mean, looking back on it, I don't know what I thought in August, but I --

MR. GOWDY: Did you suspect that the Russian --

MS. FARKAS: At that point, I probably --

MR. GOWDY: Did you suspect the Russians were involved?

MS. FARKAS: Yes, I did.

MR. GOWDY: But you didn't ask in August?

MS. FARKAS: In August, you mean why did I not go to the Hill and -- I'll let you ask the question.

MR. GOWDY: Yes. Why did you wait until -- why did you wait until December if the DNC hack was in the summer?

MS. FARKAS: My level of concern wasn't as high about whether Congress was apprised.

MR. GOWDY: Why was your level of concern higher after the election than before the election?

MS. FARKAS: Oh, because I knew that we were going to have a transition of power. It wasn't going to be from one party to another, and there were questions about whether Trump campaign associates, members, were somehow involved.

MR. GOWDY: Well, wouldn't you be interested in that before the election too?

MS. FARKAS: Yes.

MR. GOWDY: And why didn't you make the request before the election?

MS. FARKAS: Because it was more alarming after the election.

MR. GOWDY: It was more alarming after Trump won than the prospect of him winning?

MS. FARKAS: Not the prospect of him winning. The prospect that you were going to have a transfer of power from one party to another with the question of whether people who had worked for the incoming President had any involvement in what Russia did.

MR. GOWDY: So you were more concerned that a President-elect's campaign might have been involved with Russia than you were a Presidential candidate's campaign being involved with Russia?

MS. FARKAS: That's accurate.

MR. GOWDY: Can you help me understand that?

MS. FARKAS: Because either way it was disconcerting, but I wanted to make sure that the truth, whatever it was, was relayed, whatever information there was, the truth was relayed up here. So I believe in the checks and balances, and maybe there was nothing to the rumors. Maybe there wasn't collusion. I didn't know, but I wanted to make sure that Congress could know.

MR. GOWDY: Why is it more important for Congress to know than for the voter to know?

MS. FARKAS: I see Congress as an extension of the voter.

MR. ROONEY: Why is it more important for Congress to know -- Tom Rooney, Florida -- than the FBI if what we're talking about here is potentially criminal?

MS. FARKAS: I was not aware.

MR. ROONEY: Why wouldn't you -- if you had information, or if you thought you had information, or you thought you were aware of information, that could potentially be criminal in nature, what is it that giving -- you know, I get the whole where, you know, checks and balances and stuff like that, but if you're actually talking about criminal behavior, and -- versus waiting until you were sure that one party was going to win over the other and there was going to be a transfer of power from the Dem's to the Republicans, it sounds to me like your rationale is political when you talk about party, which is fine.

MS. FARKAS: Yeah.

MR. ROONEY: That doesn't bother me. But what bothers me is if you felt like you had information that was of potential criminal nature, why is it more important to come to Congress than it would be to the FBI? Did you go to the FBI with this information?

MS. FARKAS: I -- well, I had no information.

MR. ROONEY: Yeah. I heard you say that whatever it was and you didn't know if there was collusion. So what was the --

MR. ROONEY: Trey, I didn't mean to cut you off. I just -- I'm trying to play catch-up here a little bit.

You left DOD in 2015?

MS. FARKAS: October 31st.

MR. ROONEY: Is this before the Republican primaries and Democratic primaries were over?

MS. FARKAS: I believe so.

MR. ROONEY: Yeah. I know that that's a long process, the whole primary season.

MS. FARKAS: I -- yeah.

MR. ROONEY: So anything that you learned or anything -- any information that you would have had about the Russian interference in our election, which I believe the Russians were trying to interfere in our elections in some way, shape, or form. Anything that -- did you have any specific information that you thought rose to the level of criminal activity by any candidate in the Republican Or Democratic primaries?

MS. FARKAS: No, I did not.

MR. ROONEY: So when you left in 2015 probably before our nominees were established, anything after that that you would have had would have just been secondhand knowledge or hearsay?

MS. FARKAS: It would have been from the media and --

MR. ROONEY: So nothing that any of us -- unless we were briefed on in the Intel Committee would have learned differently? Would know other than what we heard --

MS. FARKAS: I mean, sources were media.

MR. ROONEY: Okay.

MR. GOWDY: Hang on a second, Tom, before we go too far.

MR. ROONEY: Yeah.

MS. FARKAS: But it was based also on my deep knowledge and understanding of Russia and how they operate.

MR. GOWDY: Well, let's get to that.

MS. FARKAS: And that we have really good intelligence on Russia.

MR. GOWDY: You said it was based on media reports. Let's go to this sentence: So it would be hidden away in the bureaucracy and that the Trump folks,

if they found out how -- we knew what we knew about this Trump staff dealing with the Russians.

Who is, we?

MS. FARKAS: So -- this is very inartful. I apologize. I think I mean the U.S. government.

MR. ROONEY: I know that you also backtracked when you did your March 2nd interview on MSNBC this year, and you said that you were misquoted in some of the things. We have it transcribed here, so if you can tell us what you were misquoted on?

That you would urge your former colleague -- former colleagues to make sure that you got everything that you had to the Hill, as much information as possible before the Obama administration left, out of fear that somehow that information would disappear. You talk about sources and methods, which I only assume that you mean our Intelligence Community and the people that -- the Trump administration had appointed, like Mike Pompeo and people like that, would somehow try to subvert what Russian's influence was in the election.

And then you say, that's why you have the leaking. So being that you were no longer in government, and you say that you don't have evidence of collusion, I'll give you the benefit of the doubt that you weren't one of the ones doing the leaking, because you wouldn't have known what to leak. Okay. Fine.

But when we -- we try to try to -- we can't indict anybody on this committee. All we can try to do is gather evidence, as much as possible, to issue a report to the Intelligence Community on how to do better to deflect against Russian involvement in the future. And that's what I hope that you're helpful with us here today in doing.

MS. FARKAS: Yes.

MR. ROONEY: And so whether it be through the election process, propaganda, actual cyber, trying to get into our polling booths or whatever, but when you say something like that, as a former prosecutor, I can only say that we've got to get this information to the Hill; that's why you have the leaking. It would -- that two plus two to me equals that you would leak, if you could, to the press this information. But you almost seem to justify it when you say that we need to get this information to the Hill, and that's why we have the leaking.

MS. FARKAS: Yeah. So the problem was that --

MR. HASKELL: Can I just clarify for one second? She doesn't say, we need to get the information to the Hill. The quote is, I was urging my former colleagues, and frankly speaking, the people on the Hill get as much information as you can. And we did go over that at the beginning of --

MS. FARKAS: Yeah.

MR. ROONEY: I'm sorry.

MS. FARKAS: Yes. That's true, it was a pull. I was telling them to pull the information from the executive branch.

MR. ROONEY: Okay. I'm sorry.

MS. FARKAS: But -- yeah.

MR. ROONEY: I'm just trying to -- I'm just trying to -- you know, when we talk about leaking and what was justified, one of the things that I think that we should issue in our report when we get to the end is when you have a political transfer of power from one party to another and whether it be for political purposes or distrust, when you have the people that are able to leak certain information to the media, that makes it really hard for people that are taking over those agencies to have credibility.

And not only that, we've got a hell of a job coming up in trying to reauthorize things like 702 and the ability, you know, for us to try to track and listen to the bad guys. And there's a lot of people upstairs that are on our side of the aisle, and they were on Democratic side of the aisle that don't trust the American government, that what we're doing is for other than nefarious reasons, because we want to listen to your phone calls or emails. And you know that as well as I do that, you know, we try to do everything that we can to jump through hoops to make sure that that intelligence has gotten the right way.

But then when you have somebody like you in your position who seemingly says that we need to get this information out there, and that's why you have the leaking. It just sort of creates this culture that people that have those levels like you do of seniority are basically, telling the leaders of the Intelligence Community, they are on the way out of the door from the Obama administration, that you can get this information out there, you can leak it to the press, and then we're left scrambling here regardless of R or D, in trying to convince our colleagues upstairs that everything that we do is for the best reason, and that the Intelligence Community, those at the top, won't, you know violate that sacred trust that we in the Intelligence Community feel like we have.

So that's why I just reasked that question again.

MS. FARKAS: So if I could just -- I know you want --

MR. HASKELL: Can I just clarify what the question is. Do you mind?
What's the question for Dr. Farkas?

MS. FARKAS: There's not a question. But I just do want to say this, I do not condone leaking, and that was at the end of a segment. And they told me my time was up. Because the next thing I was going to say is --

MR. ROONEY: Okay. Some let me ask -- let me actually ask the question.

So we had over 20 leaks from people that had extremely high levels of intelligence clearance -- and, again, this was after you left -- that went to the newspapers. And I've asked Rogers; I've asked Comey; I've asked all of the above, do you think that those leaks hurt national security? And they all said to a T, yes, we do, because they are hurting our ability to be able to keep the confidence of the American people and the Members of the Congress that people that are in the senior leadership positions will not leak such information.

Do you agree that leaking information, like, say, unmasked names or things that, you know, we do as part of FISA or whatever, do you think leaking that information to the press that might be politically expedient to hurting Donald Trump -- and I'm a Rubio guy. So, I mean, there is no, you know, parochial feeling here for Donald Trump. You know, do you think that that hurts national security?

MS. FARKAS: What I mean is Senator Rubio was attacked by Russia.

MR. ROONEY: Right. He said that, so --

MS. FARKAS: Yeah. I believe that leaking is unacceptable, because it's against the law. I mean, you take an oath; you sign a piece of paper; it's against the law.

MR. ROONEY: Okay. So this whole quote, you don't -- when you say you were misquoted --

MS. FARKAS: I said that, but I was cut off.

MR. ROONEY: What do you think people on the Hill were going to do with this information that you were --

MS. FARKAS: What you are doing now. No, I didn't know what they were going to do. I mean, I knew -- I wanted them to just get information, and then they

would decide.

MR. GOWDY: Well, why don't we talk about what you said before you were cut off?

MS. FARKAS: Sure.

MR. GOWDY: Why don't we go back to that sentence that I just asked you about. It says, the Trump folks, if they found out how we knew what we knew about their staff dealing with Russians. And your testimony was, we, was the U.S. Government.

MS. FARKAS: Uh-huh.

MR. GOWDY: Well, how would you know what the U.S. government knew at that point? You didn't work for it, did you?

MS. FARKAS: I didn't.

MR. GOWDY: Then how did you know?

MS. FARKAS: I didn't know anything.

MR. GOWDY: Well, then why would you say, we knew?

MS. FARKAS: So if they found out how we knew --

MR. GOWDY: We knew what we knew.

MS. FARKAS: Right. So obviously, I misspoke, because I wasn't we anymore.

MR. GOWDY: Well, you just spoke twice, Dr. Farkas. You said, we knew what we knew.

MS. FARKAS: So what I was saying there was that if there was collusion, if it was revealed that there was collusion --

MR. GOWDY: All right, help me find the word, if, in that sentence, because I can't find it. What I see is, the Trump folks, if they found out how we knew --

MS. FARKAS: Right. Okay.

MR. GOWDY: -- what we knew about their staff dealing with the Russians.

MS. FARKAS: Right. So I was making a leap that if, indeed, there was collusion, the way we would've uncovered it probably would have involved classified means. Right? Because --

MR. GOWDY: Well, there are a lot of ways to find it out.

MS. FARKAS: -- they were watching the Russians.

MR. GOWDY: There are a lot of ways to find it out.

MS. FARKAS: That's true. It may not be classified. I didn't know whether it was classified or unclassified. But I knew that --

MR. GOWDY: You also didn't know whether or not anybody in the Trump campaign had colluded with Russia, did you?

MS. FARKAS: I didn't.

MR. GOWDY: Well, then, why did you say what you said?

MS. FARKAS: Because I had a strong suspicion.

MR. GOWDY: Based on what?

MS. FARKAS: Based on the media reports --

MR. GOWDY: Dr. Farkas --

MS. FARKAS: -- and reporters calling me.

MR. GOWDY: Dr. Farkas, how long have you been in or around intelligence?

MS. FARKAS: 20 years.

MR. GOWDY: All right.

MS. FARKAS: Almost.

MR. GOWDY: And -- and between --

MS. FARKAS: 20 years, yeah.

MR. GOWDY: Between -- if you were to rank matters on the basis evidentiary value, where would you rank media reports? Is it the same as intercepting a telephone call?

MS. FARKAS: I'm a political scientist not a lawyer, so I can't deal with a --

MR. GOWDY: You don't have to be a lawyer to be able to answer. The good news is you don't have to be a lawyer to answer this question. Would you rather intercept a telephone call, or would you rather read a newspaper article?

MS. FARKAS: It was not my job to be an intelligence analyst.

MR. GOWDY: Nor was it is your job to be on national television to say how we knew what we knew about their staff dealing with the Russians.

MS. FARKAS: It was my job, as an -- at that time was I an analyst? What's the date? It was my job at that time, as a national security contributor for NBC/MSNBC to give my best assessment. So this was my professional assessment based on what I had read in the media and my deep knowledge of Russia --

MR. GOWDY: Well, then, let me ask you a question that --

MS. FARKAS: -- and the government.

MR. GOWDY: -- that folks didn't ask you. What did you know at that time?

MS. FARKAS: I knew what the public knew from reading the newspaper.

MR. GOWDY: Okay. Well, then that means you didn't know anything. You knew what was in the public domain. What did you know?

MS. FARKAS: What was --

MR. ROONEY: Help us out here. So when we write our report -- I also have a master's in political science too, and as you know, a lot of it deals with

empirical data that's based on actual evidence. But I also, unfortunately, went to law school as well, so --

But before you left, instead of just what you learned in the newspapers or on MSNBC because you are a contributor or on Fox News or what have you, what can you help this committee write our report that's actually helpful in saying not just based on what you read in the media reports but as a Russian expert that worked for DOD and worked on HASC, that we can do --

MS. FARKAS: SASC.

MR. ROONEY: SASC. I'm sorry.

MS. FARKAS: I did work for the HFAC as a fellow.

MR. ROONEY: Okay.

-- that's actually empirical that we can say, when we interviewed you, this is what we took out of the meaning other than you just watched TV? Because if that's all it is, we're all wasting our time here today. I mean, we've got to know more than just what you heard on TV, because we all watch TV too.

MS. FARKAS: With all due respect --

MR. ROONEY: Just help us.

MS. FARKAS: -- you're wasting your time today.

MR. ROONEY: Is there anything that you can help us with from when you were at DOD as a Russian expert that led you to believe that there was going to be information that the Russians were colluding with the Trump campaign, or they were interfering IN the elections aside from just propaganda, actual specific evidence to show that the Russian government was involving themselves in their campaign beyond the RT or trying to infiltrate our polling places or whatever, that you will felt the need that either the Obama administration or other people need to get to

sources on the Hill or whatever that's beyond just what you saw on MSNBC?

MS. FARKAS: No.

MR. GOWDY: So when you say, we knew, the reality is you knew nothing?

MS. FARKAS: Correct.

MR. GOWDY: All right. And then did you talk to anyone in the Obama administration other than -- other than those four colleagues you had on the Senate side, did you ever talk to anyone in the Obama administration about gathering as much information post election as you could?

MS. FARKAS: About who gathering information?

MR. GOWDY: Them. Same people you urged to gather other information. You urged Hill people. Did you urge anyone in the White House? Anyone in the Obama administration, hey, make sure you ask for this?

MS. FARKAS: I did not urge them.

MR. GOWDY: Did you talk to anyone in the Obama administration?

MS. FARKAS: I did.

MR. GOWDY: Who?

MS. FARKAS: Tom Malinowski.

MR. GOWDY: Who's that?

MS. FARKAS: He was an Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy Human Rights and Labor.

MR. GOWDY: Who else?

MS. FARKAS: Celeste Walender, the director for Russia and Central Asia, at the White House.

MR. GOWDY: Who else?

MS. FARKAS: Well, talked to. I mean, about what topic?

MR. GOWDY: This. About this topic. About gathering as much information as you can about what you say --

MS. FARKAS: Oh --

MR. GOWDY: Or --

MS. FARKAS: Okay I did not talk to --

MR. GOWDY: -- the Trump staff dealing with the Russians?

MS. FARKAS: I did not talk to Celeste about gathering information. I did talk to Tom, because he wanted to know if I had any information.

MR. GOWDY: All right. So if you had to do this interview all over again, you would say, I know nothing other than what your viewers are reading in the paper and watching on television, and I have no evidence that the Trump campaign colluded, conspired, or coordinated with the Russians?

MS. FARKAS: Correct.

MR. GOWDY: That's what you would say if you were being interviewed now?

MS. FARKAS: Yeah.

MR. GOWDY: All right. So why did you then say they would try to compromise those sources and methods? Who is, they? Who --

MS. FARKAS: My fear was that -- that if, indeed, it was true that someone or some persons on the Trump campaign were colluding, wittingly or unwittingly, with the Russians that they might, once in office, not voluntarily or somehow not transfer all the information --

MR. GOWDY: And my question is, who is he?

MS. FARKAS: -- or intelligence to the Hill.

They being these people who had worked on the Trump campaign, who

presumably, might be going into --

MR. GOWDY: Who in particular were you worried --

MS. FARKAS: I had no particular people in mind except for who -- the people in the media, potentially, but I didn't at that point know who would go into the Trump White House, I don't believe.

MR. GOWDY: Compromising sources or methods is a pretty specific allegation.

MS. FARKAS: I was not alleging that anyone had done it.

MR. GOWDY: No. No. No. You were alleging that they were going to do it or might try to do it.

MS. FARKAS: I was alleging there was a possibility that they might try.

MR. GOWDY: And my question is who. Who in the Trump campaign were you worried would do that?

MS. FARKAS: Anyone who might have colluded, wittingly or unwittingly, with the Russians.

MR. GOWDY: As we sit here today, do you have any evidence of collusion, coordination, or conspiracy between the Trump campaign and the Russians?

MS. FARKAS: Nothing outside of what's been reported in the press.

MR. GOWDY: All right. We have very good intelligence on Russia, so then I had talked to some of my former colleagues, and I knew they were trying to get information to the Hill. That's why you have the leaking.

What's the, that's?

MS. FARKAS: Because earlier in the segment there was a discussion about why there's leaking and about leaking, and stupidly, I decided at the end of that segment to throw in that phrase, and then they cut me off, as I said before.

So I shouldn't have gone back to that earlier conversation, especially because I ended up getting cut off, so I was unable to complete my thought, which would include -- would have included, I don't condone it.

MR. GOWDY: Well I'm not interesting whether you condone it or not. I'm interested in whether or not you know where it's coming from, that's why you have the leaking. Where is it coming from?

MS. FARKAS: I don't know.

MR. GOWDY: Do you think it was coming from the Hill?

MS. FARKAS: I don't know.

MR. GOWDY: The earlier conversation, I don't remember who whose leaking we were talking about.

██████████ Trey, we have 5 minutes on our side.

MR. ROONEY: When you say based on what Trey was just saying, they were try to compromise sources and methods, and I got your answer there, and you became worried because you said that the -- that you knew that there was more. What was the more? That you knew that you there was more.

MS. FARKAS: I didn't know what it was, but I had a feeling based on what I knew about Russia, based on the fact that there were all these reports in the press that weren't giving us the full picture. They were raising more questions --

MR. GOWDY: So when you say, knew, what you really meant was felt?

MS. FARKAS: Correct.

MR. GOWDY: You didn't know anything?

MS. FARKAS: That's correct.

MR. GOWDY: So why did you say "know"? Why did you go on national television and represent that you knew something that you did not know?

MS. FARKAS: Because my experience, again, in the national security field as a consumer of intelligence with the administration and with the Russians led me to make this inference.

MR. GOWDY: What inference?

MS. FARKAS: The inference that there was more to the story than the press was reporting.

MR. GOWDY: Well, that's not what you said. You said the Trump staff dealing with the Russians. Is that the inference that you were trying to leak?

MS. FARKAS: The -- I -- I believe that there probably was not kind of dealing, that the reports in the press were not wrong.

MR. ROONEY: Do you still believe that now?

MS. FARKAS: I still believe that the reports in the press are not wrong. That --

MR. ROONEY: So you disagree with Clapper, Comey, and Rogers, and everybody that's testified before this committee saying that they have no evidence?

MS. FARKAS: About -- of what?

MR. ROONEY: That you -- that you knew that you there was more. Now you're saying that you felt that there was more.

MS. FARKAS: Correct.

MR. ROONEY: So I'm asking you, do you still feel like there was more when you say that they would try to compromise the sources and methods and that we would no longer have access to this intelligence?

MR. HASKELL: So are you --

MR. ROONEY: Do you feel today that there was collusion, all this time later after you -- March 2nd?

MS. FARKAS: I don't think it matters what I feel.

MR. ROONEY: Well, you're here. I'm curious what you feel.

MS. FARKAS: Well, I'm concerned --

MR. ROONEY: I mean, you would be contradicting a lot of people that worked in your administration.

MS. FARKAS: Right. I got it. And I didn't like when Clapper came out definitively, because --

MR. ROONEY: Why didn't you like it? It's not a matter of liking. I mean, he's answering a question.

MS. FARKAS: Well, you asked for my opinion, so my opinion was I didn't like it. And the reason I didn't like it was because I felt like we need people who are cleared to have the information to review it, to tell the American public, including me, whether there was collusion or not.

MR. ROONEY: I agree with you. But based on what?

MS. FARKAS: Based on things I didn't know, because I wasn't privy to it anymore.

MR. GOWDY: So we can summarize this. Despite the fact that you will repeatedly used the phrase, we knew, you knew nothing?

MS. FARKAS: That's correct.

MR. GOWDY: All right. And despite the fact that you allege the Trump folks were dealing with the Russians, you have no evidence of that?

MS. FARKAS: That's correct.

MR. GOWDY: And do you know who has done any of the leaking?

MS. FARKAS: No, I do not.

MR. GOWDY: So when we hear the word, knew, we should really insert

feel?

MS. FARKAS: Or infer.

MR. GOWDY: Well, to infer means you have to have a factual basis from which to infer it. So what is the factual basis from which you have inferred that the Trump folks were dealing with the Russians?

MS. FARKAS: The media reports and the way that the Trump officials -- I'm sorry -- the way that the Russians behaved.

MR. ROONEY: We have, like, a minute left and then the Democrats are going to go. Do you have anything that you can help us with with regard to your, just, like closing as a former Under Secretary -- Under Secretary or deputy?

MS. FARKAS: Deputy, but I'll take under.

MR. ROONEY: Sorry. -- as far as lessons learned that we can for future elections, regardless of who the President is, or what party they come from, that we could do a better job in issuing a report to the Intelligence Community as to how they can do their job better with regard to this stuff, Russian engagement?

MS. FARKAS: I mean, without knowing exactly what the Russians did?

MR. ROONEY: Well, you know, from what you do know. I mean, you were there long enough to know that the Russians don't -- the Russians and Vladimir Putin clearly want to wreak havoc, so --

MS. FARKAS: Yeah. One thing I would say also, that I don't like that I get annoyed with, former Director Comey says, they're coming back. I don't believe they left. So they are in your systems; they are gathering information on all of you and -- that they will use against you if it's convenient for them. And it's not a Republican or a Democratic thing. These guys -- I mean, the Russians, they don't care. And they'll make up something fake if you become inconvenient to them.

You know, I'm having to spend money on this, because all my friends said I had to bring this nice man. But that's a way also of kind of muzzling people like me who speak up strongly about Russia. I didn't -- I mean, yes, I care if Americans were involved. But what I really care about is that Russia doesn't take down our country, because there, Comey was right, you know, they are trying to run us down. I mean, this is not a laughing matter having watched Russia for 3 years. I know I sound like a crazy woman, and I was coming out of an administration where I sounded like a crazy woman half the time I was in the administration and then I came out and I was ringing the alarm bell on Russia the whole time.

MR. ROONEY: I don't think that sounds crazy at all. And I think that that's very helpful. And, I mean, I don't think you were wrong about any of what you just said. So, I mean that's really where I think an interview like this could be useful as far as how we move forward as a country.

MS. FARKAS: Yeah.

██████████ Mr. Himes, Ms. Speier, you have 45 minutes.

MR. HIMES: I think the ranking member --

██████████ Mr. Schiff and Ms. Speier are too.

MR. SCHIFF: And I may defer until one of my other colleagues -- for Jackie to arrive.

██████████ She's here.

MR. SCHIFF: So there you are.

So I just have a few questions, then I'll turn it over to ██████████ and Jackie.

First of all, thank you for coming in.

MS. FARKAS: Thank you.

MR. SCHIFF: I share the concerns that you raised at the very end that I

don't want this to deter other people from speaking out for fear that they will be requested or required to come before us to explain their TV appearances.

I can assure you that if any committee went through any of our TV appearances, they would find ample room for critique. And I know a lot of mine have been far less artful than yours.

MS. FARKAS: I probably shouldn't flatter you with a response.

MR. SCHIFF: So let me just go over a couple of the key points, if I could.

If I understand your testimony, you had a concern based on the open source reporting and that if people associated with the Trump campaign were somehow coordinating with the Russians, and then the administration brought those people in, that information or intelligence pertaining to the Russia involvement in our elections might be buried and Congress might never find out the information. Was that your concern?

MS. FARKAS: That's correct. That was one of my concerns.

MR. SCHIFF: And, of course, the much broader concern of what Russia had done, what Russia might do in the future?

MS. FARKAS: Correct.

MR. SCHIFF: And a part of your concern, and a part of the reason you were talking about it on TV is that you have 20 or 30 years of experience in dealing with national security policy as well as the Russian -- what we call the Russia Playbook?

MS. FARKAS: Uh-huh.

MR. SCHIFF: You need to say yes or no.

MS. FARKAS: Correct. Yes. Yes, sir.

MR. SCHIFF: So when my colleagues asked you about your comments, we knew and suggested it was based on nothing. In fact, you were expressing an opinion based on 20, 30 years of experience.

MS. FARKAS: Correct.

MR. SCHIFF: And very abundant open source reporting?

MS. FARKAS: As well as a knowledge of Russia, classified and unclassified, from when I was in government, which didn't include this topic.

MR. SCHIFF: And, you know, while there's been certainly inaccuracies in the open source reporting, there's also been a lot of information open source that may or may not be accurate, in fact, could be accurate?

MS. FARKAS: That's correct.

MR. SCHIFF: I would say that -- I would ask you, but it would be rhetorical only. Do you know how many dozens of consultants there are on television talking national security who have far less experience than you do that are offering opinions based on open source reporting?

MS. FARKAS: Right. And I will say, Congressman, if I can, that I try very hard -- the reason I -- I had done television before in 2009 when I left the Governing D commission, but I went back to doing media work intentionally so that the American public could better understand the Russia threat, and I felt that I was in a position to educate the American public on that, because I could speak with a lot of knowledge, experience, background, and be semiarticulate.

MR. SCHIFF: And the -- but the underlying point you were trying to get

across in this interview, which has brought you to us today --

MS. FARKAS: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: -- was that based on the open source reporting, you had two concerns, and correct me if I'm wrong. One concern was if the allegations of coordination was accurate, then there might be an incentive in the new administration to prevent Congress from ever learning about these sources of information.

MS. FARKAS: Correct. And I had --

MR. SCHIFF: Did you also have a concern that the administration might turn off those sources of information if we were getting reporting that substantiated the evidence?

MS. FARKAS: If indeed, my supposition that there might have been some Trump campaign involvement was true, so I knew there was a possibility.

MR. SCHIFF: Were you also concerned, knowing what you did about the Russian Playbook, that the open source reporting may not be the last word on what the Russians were doing or have done?

MS. FARKAS: Absolutely.

MR. SCHIFF: And getting to the comments you made at the very end of the interview, I just want to clarify, because I think there were a couple of interchanges you had with my colleagues where you were finishing each other's sentences.

At the end of that interview, you alluded to something that was raised early in the interview concerning leaking.

MS. FARKAS: Yes.

MR. SCHIFF: And you were giving an explanation for why the leaks might be taking place, and you had meant to add that you were not condoning it, but you

ran out of time before you could put the exclamation point on it, this doesn't make it right, but it may explain why it happened?

MS. FARKAS: That's absolutely correct. The producer spoke in my ear, so I was cut off. So I essentially started a new topic, but it was going back to an earlier topic, and I very rarely do that, and it's a dumb move when you're on television, because you then have this dangling sentence. And the rest of what I wanted to say, as you said and as I said earlier, which is I don't condone it, but that's the explanation. That's one explanation, is this alarm.

MR. SCHIFF: I do, you know, just for the sake of clarification, want to make another point, this isn't really as much a question, but I don't want you to leave with a misleading impression. We have a difference of opinion on what the state of the evidence is on the issue of collusion. Director Clapper initially testified that he hadn't seen evidence of collusion, but then clarified that he wasn't read into what the FBI was looking at, and further clarified that he hadn't seen conclusive evidence, which of course, is different than whether he had seen evidence.

Others have similarly said that their information was either limited because they weren't read in or they left office before they had a chance to get any further developments. So I just wanted to share that with you so you weren't left under a different impression.

MS. FARKAS: Thank you. If I could, Congressman, it is possible that people were left out of compartments. As you know, our intelligence on Russia is very compartmented, and I will leave it at that.

But it would not be unforeseen for even the DNI to possibly be not privy to raw data, raw intelligence, because of the -- because of that person's schedule and other things.

MR. SCHIFF: And, you know -- and I don't want you to defer conversely that I am suggesting more than I am on this subject. We are still closer to the beginning of this investigation than the end. And I'm not prepared to draw any conclusions about collusion, coordination, obstruction, or anything else.

But you know, one of the things that I would like to explore with you is what you know about how the Russians operate that caused you to be concerned that there may be more of the story.

So can you share with us any thoughts you have on tactics the Russians used to gather compromising material on people or tactics they used to financially entangle people as a way to insert influence against business people, or the use of paid social media, armies, and trolls. Were there other tactics that the Russians used that concerned you, have you seen in the past that they might be employing here as well?

MR. HASKELL: Can I just stop for one second? I just want to make clear that I don't have any sort of security clearance. I don't know if that -- if the answer to that question might involve some sort of classified information. I don't know what the state of the room is, but I just want to make that abundantly clear.

MS. FARKAS: I can answer it unclassified.

Things like -- so there were some salacious things in the dossier, those are things that the -- things the Russians do; they bug hotels. They lure -- you know, they have honey -- they set honey traps, so they lure people to be sources based on compromising material.

MR. SCHIFF: And are there any other concerns you have about tactics the Russians used?

MS. FARKAS: I mean, the Russians also use their money to corrupt people.

So when I was reading in the press about business dealings that Trump campaign officials had, whether it was Manafort or Carter Page, I -- they were very much of the pattern that Russia uses to gain allies and to work with foreigners or Russians for that matter.

[5:15 p.m.]

MR. SCHIFF: And in terms of our further work, are there any areas where you think we ought to pay particular attention, in the sense that what you have seen in the open reporting strikes you as very inconsistent with how the Russians operate that you would say this is an area where we think you should pay particular close attention?

MS. FARKAS: I mean, I do believe that, as I mentioned, the money, following the Russian money is very important, because they use their money to gain access and influence over individuals, whether it's legal or illegal, depends. I can't make that assessment. But they certainly pay organizations and entities in foreign countries, including the United States. And, again, as I said, this may not all be illegal, but it gives obviously an influence to a foreign adversary.

And, of course, the cyber operations, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I can't get into classified.

I would say -- I would have the -- I will tell you the DIA analysts are very good at looking at what Russia could do in a worst case scenario. And having all of that in my head made me also really alarmed about what was happening.

I think around the same time all of this was coming out, [REDACTED]

So knowing what the Russians surveil, knowing their -- something about their war plans, their war gaming, I became alarmed that for them -- I mean, they already had taken a very risky maneuver.

If this was true, if what I was reading in the papers was true, and it smelled, it felt true to me -- I'm leaving aside the Trump stuff for the moment, but what they had

done to us -- that this was alarming because it was a real escalation in our -- in the adversarial nature of our relationship, and it demonstrated that they were willing to escalate, take a very risky maneuver with this intervention in our elections.

And I believe -- and I continue to believe -- if we don't counter it, they might do more. And the more, you have to look at Ukraine and see what they've done with electric grids there, for example.

I would say this in open testimony too. So --

MR. SCHIFF: Mr. Chairman --

MS. FARKAS: Because, if I could, it's not just -- it's capabilities and intent. And I had seen the capabilities -- and, again, I won't get into what they are -- and that's a combination of the assets they have, conventional and unconventional, the military intelligence assets, as well as their doctrine.

And when you marry that with an intent that was, frankly speaking, increasingly unfriendly, starting with Putin's resumption of the Presidency, his taking of the Presidency again in 2012, and then really ratcheted up from 2014 on, I am alarmed. And, again, having been trained now in this national security apparatus to consider the worst case scenario, that's what I do now, is I worry about the worst case scenarios.

MR. SCHIFF: Mr. Chairman, can we take a quick break, give the witness a break, but also I'd like to confer with my colleagues to see how much more we need to ask the witness.

MR. ROONEY: Do you want us out?

MR. SCHIFF: I'm sorry?

██████████ No, just a 5-minute break.

MS. FARKAS: All of us out or --

MR. SCHIFF: No. You can take a break if you like and use the facilities or have something to drink.

██████████ Five minutes.

[Recess.]

MS. SPEIER: So, Dr. Farkas, thank you for being here today.

Ms. FARKAS: Sure.

MS. SPEIER: And thank you for your public service.

MS. FARKAS: Thank you.

MS. SPEIER: That's an extraordinary career.

Let me just go into some of your background a little bit. Did you ever live in Russia?

MS. FARKAS: No.

MS. SPEIER: How many visits would you say you've made to Russia?

MS. FARKAS: I can't say offhand. So I went there when I was executive director of the Graham-Talent WMD Commission in '08, and then when I was DASD a handful of times.

MS. SPEIER: Do you have friends, contacts in Russia?

MS. FARKAS: I do not have friends there. And I have -- I have people who are professional contacts, including Americans.

MS. SPEIER: So you had said earlier that you have observed the Russians using money to corrupt people.

MS. FARKAS: Yeah. Not firsthand, though.

MS. SPEIER: Not first -- no, of course not.

You know, there's been a lot of speculation about some \$100 million that's been spent buying condos in Trump Towers in Florida. Were you familiar about

that while you were in the administration or is that something you just learned through the media afterwards?

MS. FARKAS: That's something that I just learned through the media afterwards.

MS. SPEIER: Is that the kind of thing that you had observed in your career that the Russians do? You've mentioned that they try to gain influence over people by --

MS. FARKAS: By spending money. So making business deals with them. For example, former German Chancellor Shroeder was put on the board of Gazprom, and in that way Russia gained influence over Germany's energy policy. You know, there are other -- I can't think of offhand, but there are many examples of the Russians doing business or giving people money.

MS. SPEIER: Have you studied Putin, just psychologically?

MS. FARKAS: As much as possible, yes.

MS. SPEIER: So can you give us an idea of your armchair psychological evaluation of him and what makes him tick and what were his intentions in terms of undermining our elections?

MS. FARKAS: So I will stay away from analyzing him as a person, because that was never my job. My job in the Department of Defense was to understand his national security -- his objectives for Russia.

And it was and continues to be my assessment that Putin has three main objectives, him and his Kremlin. Number one, keep him in power, that is, to keep his political system, his autocratic political system in place, as well as the mafia-style crony capitalism in place. Second objective was to ensure that Russia is regarded as a great power again. And the third objective is to rewrite the rules of the

international order so that it is no longer acceptable for the international community or military intervention by the international community to defend the citizens of a state against their despotic, brutal leadership.

MS. SPEIER: So that sounds like he wants to undermine NATO.

MS. FARKAS: He wants to undermine the -- Russia is no longer acting as a status quo power. Russia would like to rewrite the rules of the international order so that, in effect, we go back to a 19th century sphere of influence, and that institutions like NATO and the EU are weakened, if not eliminated, because those institutions allow countries collectively to resist Russian efforts to control various countries or situations.

So specifically for Russia, the number one area that they want to control is the area of the former Soviet Union, so Eastern Europe and Central Asia, as well as the parts that are no longer part of the Soviet Union, as well as if they can influence the East Bloc, because they have a kind of neoimperial construct, but they also have a defensiveness about the West that's rooted in history.

MS. SPEIER: So how often did you receive intelligence briefings on Russia?

MS. FARKAS: Every day.

MS. SPEIER: Every day?

MS. FARKAS: Yes. Not necessarily orally, but I would get a big binder every day of intelligence on Russia that ran the gamut, Russia and my 13 other countries and my functional responsibility, which was conventional arms control.

MS. SPEIER: So would you say that, within the administration, you had among the best handles on all things Russia?

MS. FARKAS: Yes.

MS. SPEIER: Who else would you put in that category?

MS. FARKAS: At the time that I was in the administration, the senior director for Russia at the White House, the assistant secretary of state for Europe -- European affairs. I can give you their names. Celeste Walender and Victoria Nuland.

At lower levels, DIA experts on Russia and, as I said earlier, their military and intelligence capabilities as well as their intent. Yeah.

And I would say the reason I call out Celeste, myself, and Tora is because that was like the core of our mission and our responsibility, whereas, arguably, other people had other things they had to balance in their portfolio.

MS. SPEIER: The term has been used frequently that people can be wittingly or unwittingly used by --

MS. FARKAS: Yes.

MS. SPEIER: -- the Russians. And some speculation that maybe Trump's associates were being used unwittingly. Could you speak to wittingly and unwittingly and how Vladimir Putin and the Russians engage in that?

MS. FARKAS: I think the Russians are very clever. They always like to have a little bit of an ability to deny, like a veneer of denial. So even with this intervention in our elections, you see them deny it, but at the same time they'll give little hints that, well, maybe really they did do it.

So another example would be Crimea, where the Russian President said: Oh, there weren't Russian troops involved, those were other militias. And then literally a month later or even less, even a shorter time period, he said: Okay, it was us, you know, we did it.

And then in the East, the same thing, he said, there -- in another part of the

East, in Donbass, he said: There were no Russian troops in there. But then -- I don't remember the exact time gap, but it was like not more than months, he said: Well, yeah, okay, there are Russian troops there, but they're volunteers.

So there's this kind of deny but kind of with a wink admit so that you're scared of them. And in the collusion area, they don't need to say: Do this for us. It can be unspoken. You know, if you want to be -- get this fee for giving a speech, or if you want to make this money on this business deal, then it's unspoken that you might help us somewhere. But, you know --

MS. SPEIER: So paying a former general to come to Russia and give a speech at RT is something that is not unusual for them to do when they're trying to curry favor.

MS. FARKAS: They would try to do it. What's highly unusual is that an American general would do it.

MS. SPEIER: And why was Jill --

MS. FARKAS: It's very risky.

MS. SPEIER: Why do you think Jill Stein was there.

MS. FARKAS: Well, that's another interest -- I'm so glad you asked that, because nobody draws attention to that.

My guess is that she also received some money, but I don't know that. I was very concerned to see her there too, and I was also concerned that -- I didn't go to anybody with that concern, but -- not in that case. But I was concerned, mainly because I don't know what impact it had and, hopefully, you guys are looking into it.

But it is of concern. I mean, I think the idea that a foreign government can influence us indirectly, using their money and their wealth and their power, is disconcerting.

MS. SPEIER: Did you ever worry that Putin would force companies that were doing business in Russia to give campaign contributions to certain candidates? Is that something that --

MS. FARKAS: No. Because when I was in government, I didn't -- I honestly did not foresee this type of meddling in our elections. Again, that's why I was so alarmed, because this is a real escalation. And understanding what this escalation means -- you know, the Russians think they're at war with us. This is war. It's just a war without bullets. And I know I sound crazy. And we don't want a war with Russia, even a war without bullets.

MS. SPEIER: No, I've used the same words. It is. It's cyber war, it's an act of war.

MS. FARKAS: Yeah. It's war against our democracy.

MS. SPEIER: So you're not saying anything that I haven't said publicly. So --

MS. FARKAS: And I just worry that Americans don't understand this, including our President. And it's serious, because it can affect him too.

MS. SPEIER: So you're concerned that this is an act of war and that they are at war with us and there does not appear to be any heightened alert by our President or, frankly, the American people.

What can you foresee happening, potentially?

MS. FARKAS: Well, I think, again, the way the Russians will go about -- they don't want real war with us. They'll try to use their influence.

And I've seen them do this in Europe. So they'll use their influence to buy people, companies, buy their way into the American system, perhaps through directing campaign contributions and any means they can. They use

economic/political subversion to gain influence. And they can corrupt our entire system and, therefore, exercise influence.

They've done it to greater or lesser extent in various countries, including even the, I believe, the country that my parents came from, in order to be in a free democratic country with equal economic opportunity, which is why I'm -- in part, why I'm passionate about this, because we can't let up. This is a special place, this country of ours.

MS. SPEIER: So when Putin annexed Crimea, and subsequently, earlier this year, there was this offer that was made -- and this may be speculation, we don't know if it's confirmed -- that somehow someone within The Trump Organization met with a Ukrainian legislator to offer a deal which would lease Ukraine -- no, lease Crimea for 50 years to Russia, what was your take on that?

MS. FARKAS: I'm not sure I'm aware of what you're referring to.

MS. SPEIER: Okay. Why do you think Russia cares about Ukraine?

MS. FARKAS: A couple of reasons. First of all, I mentioned earlier that Putin wants to stay in power and he doesn't -- and he's against the right to protect or the idea that people can go in and demand a democracy when they are being ruled by an autocratic dictator who is brutalizing them.

Putin believes that the Arab Spring, the Iraq invasion, the Libya operation, and what happened in Ukraine are all of the same cloth, and that they're all directed somehow and controlled by the United States, and that we influenced what happened in Ukraine in order to change the government from Yanukovich, who was friendly to Putin and did his bidding, was highly corrupt and didn't do a good job providing for his people, from my perspective, to the current democratically elected government.

And Putin fears very much that the same thing, if it's successful in Ukraine, that the Russian people might look at that as a potential model. Because the other reason he cares about it has to do with the history and the neoimperial perspective that Russians have, whereby Ukraine and Russia are one and the same.

But the real motivation is the first one. I think the second one is there as a -- I'm not sure how much it matters, but it may matter to some people in the Kremlin more than others. But certainly, he fears the same dynamic affecting him, the Maidon effect.

MS. SPEIER: Do you think that Putin has any interest in recreating the USSR?

MS. FARKAS: Not as it existed, but I believe that what he would like is a sphere of influence over the territory that was the Soviet Union. He would like to have economic and political dominance, because it feeds the coffers and it feeds the pride.

MS. SPEIER: Some would suggest that the sanctions that we imposed at the end of last year were very modest. How would you assess them?

MS. FARKAS: I agree. The sanctions, you mean, in response to their attack on our elections?

MS. SPEIER: Uh-huh.

MS. FARKAS: I think they were very modest. I'm a coauthor of a paper written, put out by The Third Way last week, which details six categories of other actions that I believe our government should take -- and primarily Congress should take -- in order to respond more fully to what Russia did.

MS. SPEIER: And what are those six actions?

MS. FARKAS: Well, first of all, increase loopholes in the sanctions law.

Increase enforcement and provide -- by Treasury and Justice Departments -- and provide appropriate resources for them. Increase loopholes in the Foreign Agent Registration Act, so that if you are working overseas you're also required to report. The Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, that's more in the enforcement category.

Do more with our allies to -- and primarily the Europeans but also others around the world -- to increase transparency of ownership. So the beneficial ownership, so whereby you can use shell companies. Eliminate the ability to use shell companies both here and in Europe, so that there's no, you know, so-called dark money influencing the real estate market or elsewhere, that we know exactly whose money is coming into our system. And that needs to be done internationally. As well -- I mean, those are the main categories.

But there's more. Cyber criminal -- sorry, prosecution of cyber criminals. Because the Russian Government, they have their intelligence operators, but they also work with hackers. And every time they steal your credit card information, they're also providing that information to the Russian Intelligence Community.

MS. SPEIER: Were you aware of the dachas when you were working within the White House and the Department of Defense?

MS. FARKAS: You mean --

MS. SPEIER: They're called dachas, the one in Maryland and the one in New York.

MS. FARKAS: Oh, yeah. Yes. I was not.

MS. SPEIER: You were not aware of them?

MS. FARKAS: No.

MS. SPEIER: So there's been some talk of giving them back to the Russians. What would your opinion be of that?

MS. FARKAS: That would be a disaster, because, as I understand from the reporting, it takes a lot of FBI resources to watch these facilities. And what they were doing in those facilities was spying on Americans and conducting this election hacking operation. Based on what I've read in the press, that's what I believe they were doing. So why would we let them come back and do that to us again? We should not make it easy on the Russians to do what they're doing to us.

Plus, they have done nothing to warrant such a move, because they haven't punished anyone in Russia for conducting this operation against us. They haven't started, to my knowledge, treating our intelligence officers better. They haven't given us a St. Petersburg consulate I believe we are asking for.

So -- but first and foremost, they need to cease and desist their interference in our political process.

MS. SPEIER: You said they never left.

MS. FARKAS: I don't know that to be a fact. But the way they operate, they sit and they -- well, first of all, they collect information. So we know from the press they also took information from Republican sources, was what the press said. So I'm guessing from the RNC also. And we know that there were attacks on Senator Rubio.

So my guess is they have data. This is the way the Russians operate. They take data, you know, compromising data, and when it's convenient they'll use it against you.

So in that sense, they haven't left. But they probably also have bots and things embedded in our systems that we don't know about. Again, I'm not a technical expert, but based on what I read and how they operate.

And also, there's an embassy still here and there are probably still some

people collecting intelligence. And we know that they try at every turn to use every means they can to collect on us. And when they rolled up those 10 spies, I mean, I don't know, were they the only spies? Remember 2010? I think about that sometimes.

MS. SPEIER: You said earlier that they probably have created dossiers on each of us.

MS. FARKAS: Yeah.

MS. SPEIER: Can you expound on that a little bit, based on your experience dealing with them?

MS. FARKAS: Well, they're just really good intelligence operators, and so, you know, they'll find any way they can to create a psychological profile. And if they need to use it, they will.

MS. SPEIER: So it wouldn't be too much of a stretch to have them dumping emails on any one of us in our reelection bid.

MS. FARKAS: I mean, I would have thought -- if you had asked me that question in 2015, I would have said: They wouldn't do that. But now, no, it's not a stretch. They can dump material, but they can also doctor your emails and dump doctored emails within the context of your reelection campaign. That's what they did, as you know, in France. And let's see what happens in Germany.

MS. SPEIER: I have one last question.

MS. FARKAS: The Germans, I think, warned them. So that's interesting. I don't know exactly what they said and how that went down. But it will be interesting to see if they are deterred by the German warning and by Chancellor Merkel really being tough.

MS. SPEIER: You referenced CIA analysts. It would be really well worth

our time and investment in speaking with them. Are there specific individuals there that you would recommend that we talk to?

MS. FARKAS: So -- yeah, let me think for a minute. So at the Office of Naval Analysis, ONA, [REDACTED] who worked in my office. And then [REDACTED] I think is his last name.

[REDACTED] Dr. Farkas, just to be clear, you're not referring to anyone who's undercover?

MS. FARKAS: Not to my knowledge, no. No, these are analysts. And --

MS. SPEIER: That's a good start. Thank you.

MS. FARKAS: Yeah. And they can direct you to others. But, you know, I would -- because what I would encourage you to do -- what I found was the CIA, they looked at the big picture, the strategic picture.

But the DIA scared the bejesus out of me, because they looked at the war plans and they looked at, again, this capabilities and intent and the doctrine, the war plans, how they operate, what they're doing with all these systems.

And some of it may be very compartmented; some of it may not be. But to get the picture of what they're collecting, why they're collecting, what their analysis is.

Because the Russians believe -- they know they can't win head to head conventionally with us. So the way they would prevail if, God forbid, we were in a real war with them, would be asymmetric.

And so what they're doing is they have this doctrine, you know, basically I would call it an escalation doctrine -- this has already been in the -- in the press -- but is to try to scare us away from coming to the aid of our NATO allies, for example.

MS. SPEIER: Thank you very much.

BY [REDACTED]

Q Dr. Farkas, my name is [REDACTED] again, and we really appreciate your insights today. It's been really interesting listening to you. I have only a few questions and then I'll see if my colleagues have any questions.

You mentioned that when it comes to Russia and collusion that it is unspoken with the Russians. That you spoke about financial ties and sort of personal entrapment. Is it fair to say that they are creating vulnerabilities --

A Absolutely.

Q -- that create influence?

A Yes.

Q When you left the Obama administration in October 2015 -- I believe that's right?

A That's right.

Q Did you leave the Federal Government completely at that time?

A I did, although I stayed on contract as a consultant with the Policy Office at DOD. So I could be on call if they needed me.

Q Is it fair to say once you left your role in October 2015 that you no longer had access to classified information?

A Correct. I mean, I didn't get any. I could have, I suppose, but I didn't.

Q And you didn't take any classified information?

A I did not. Meaning I had the clearances -- I have the clearances -- but I have not had access to any information.

Q Because you no longer have a need to know?

A Yes. It would be up to somebody else to ask me to help them.

Q Is it fair to say that you haven't had visibility then into any of the internal decisions or processes within the Obama administration after you left?

A Yes.

██████████ ██████████ you have 5 minutes.

BY ██████████

Q Dr. Farkas, as you were speaking and you had commented earlier that you are not a lawyer and, therefore, we spoke for the last 10, 15 minutes about harm and of that Russians can do, and you were not applying a legal standard, correct?

A Correct.

Q In fact, you made the point that some of this behavior, some of this conduct can be legal but still very harmful to U.S. interests.

So you were applying, as an analyst, more of an intelligence or counterintelligence standard, that the damage could be from an intelligence perspective, even if not rising to a criminal standard.

A Correct.

Q Can you expand on that a little bit of how this works, that even if people are not prosecuted, what actions, when you were talking about actions, that this would be something for the Intelligence Community or for the government to act on even if there were no criminal prosecutions?

A Because if Americans were influenced by a foreign adversary to take action or to forego action, this would be a national security -- an issue for -- of national security concern.

Q And when you were speaking about that Putin likes some deniability, not total, he could -- when we were talking about -- and you read in the ICA talking

about an influence campaign, and by his campaign creating -- you've seen other places in the world Russians creating a network of contacts, and some may be used wittingly and some unwittingly. But unless Putin himself wants to wink and nod, as you spoke earlier, he likes the deniability, that it could be -- that something serious could be only tracked back to a cutout. Is that correct?

A That is correct. Because what it does is it exacerbates divisions among his adversaries. So, in the case of the United States, those who don't want to believe that he is responsible and pin the blame on him can say he's not to blame. And then there's an internal fight between those people and the ones who believe that Putin did it.

The same thing happens in the NATO context all the time. The Russians will do something, and I can -- there are a million examples, and we would have arguments in the NATO context. And I won't name the foreign country, because it gets dicey, but one country would say: Well, I'm not sure about your intelligence on that. Meanwhile, they were relying on our intelligence operationally.

So they thought our intelligence was perfectly fine when their men -- and they're mainly men -- were under fire in a third country, and they trusted our intelligence like nobody's business, but they didn't trust this intelligence, they didn't want to hear, pertaining to Russia.

That happened over the course of my tenure in the administration more than once. It just was inconvenient politically for a given country or countries to recognize that Russia was to blame publicly. So even though they knew, they could hide behind this veneer because the Russians wouldn't admit it. And if the Russians didn't admit it, they didn't have to.

Q And from the financial standpoint, following the money, a maze of

shell companies or myriad business transactions that cannot lead -- that maybe lead back only as far as an oligarch, but not -- gives Putin if not plausible, at least some kind of deniability, correct?

A Yes, that is correct. I mean, like -- I haven't looked into investments that Russia has made in other countries like Hungary, for example, where they've been active for a long time. But some of it is government to government, but they absolutely rely on individual actors that they pretend are independent.

But they are -- they may be individuals, but they're not independent, because of the way the Kremlin operates. They have ties with the mob, with cyber criminals, with oligarchs. All of these people know what the rules are, and often they're unspoken.

██████████ You have 1 minute. Sorry, ma'am.

MS. FARKAS: The rules are to make Putin happy.

██████████ Ma'am, if you don't mind, since we took that 5-minute break, we'll just kick over to the 15 minutes, because members have votes coming up.

MS. FARKAS: Sure.

MR. GOWDY: Dr. Farkas, I want to make sure that I understand your original testimony correctly. You became concerned in December of 2016, based on your experience and knowledge of Russia and combined with public reporting.

MS. FARKAS: I was concerned already before December, Congressman.

MR. GOWDY: Well, then that gets me back to why you didn't do anything previously. You didn't do anything before the election. You waited until after the election.

MS. FARKAS: I spoke publicly and wrote publicly expressing my concern.

MR. GOWDY: But you didn't reach out to your former colleagues on the Hill.

MS. FARKAS: I did not, because I probably assumed they were on top of it.

MR. GOWDY: When did you start reaching out to your colleagues on the Hill?

MS. FARKAS: As I mentioned, in December of 2016.

MR. GOWDY: That's the soonest you started reaching out, was after the election.

MS. FARKAS: That is correct.

MR. GOWDY: Do you remember doing an interview with Ezra Klein.

MS. FARKAS: Yes, I do.

MR. GOWDY: Well, I'm trying to reconcile what you just said --

MS. FARKAS: I did two, but I think you're talking -- I know which one you're talking about.

MR. GOWDY: I'm trying to reconcile what you just said with this: "The reason I was so upset last summer was that I was getting winks and nods from inside." What do you mean by "inside"?

MS. FARKAS: So there I was referring to Tom Malinowski trying to get information to the Hill. And after looking at that in preparation for today, I realized I don't think I was referring to that conversation. I was misremembering when that conversation occurred, because that conversation with him occurred later than the summer.

MR. GOWDY: So is your testimony today that what you said to Ezra Klein was wrong?

MS. FARKAS: I think it was inaccurate in that the winks and nods or the -- and what I call winks and nods, basically the interaction I had with Tom came later.

MR. GOWDY: Well, if you're getting winks and nods from people, why did you have to reach out and urge other people? If it were the same people, they'd already know. So you had to be getting winks and nods from someone inside that already knew. So it wouldn't be the four Senate colleagues. Who would that have been?

MS. FARKAS: I don't understand.

MR. GOWDY: Who were you getting the winks and nods from.

MS. FARKAS: So, again, I met with Tom Malinowski, and he asked me what do I know, and told me that they were working in the administration to provide information to the Hill. So that confirmed.

What I meant by wink and nod was a confirmation that people in the administration were concerned and trying to get information to the Hill.

MR. GOWDY: Perhaps it's just me, but that may be the single most circular thing I have ever heard in my life. That the administration had all of this information, but they were worried that the information wouldn't make it to the administration, so they're going through you --

MS. FARKAS: No, to the Hill.

MR. GOWDY: -- to go through Senate colleagues.

Well, if the administration already had it --

MS. FARKAS: Oh, why would they ask me?

MR. GOWDY: You were worried about it not becoming public. Did you think that the Hill staffers were more likely to make it public?

MS. FARKAS: No. I did not want it to become public.

MR. GOWDY: Well, then why did you say this: "So I became very worried, because not enough of it was coming out into the open." Is there a difference

between public and open?

MS. FARKAS: No. But what my intent was --

MR. GOWDY: Well, help me understand.

MS. FARKAS: My intent was that Congress receive the information so that Congress could then make a determination about what the public needed to know.

MR. GOWDY: Congress doesn't classify information, do they, Dr. Farkas?

MS. FARKAS: Not to my knowledge.

MR. GOWDY: We don't declassify information, do we?

MS. FARKAS: Not to my knowledge.

MR. GOWDY: Was this information from the administration classified?

You mentioned sources --

MS. FARKAS: I don't know.

MR. GOWDY: Well, you mentioned sources and methods in the sentence right before it. Are sources and methods classified?

MS. FARKAS: Well, anything with sources and methods would be classified.

MR. GOWDY: All right. So you mentioned sources and methods in the sentence right before you used the word "coming into the open." So what were you talking about?

MR. HASKELL: Congressman, do you mind if she reviewed that? I have a copy of --

MR. GOWDY: Sure.

MR. HASKELL: Thank you.

MS. FARKAS: It is circular, because -- because I was looking at what was in the open, in the press, and I was concerned. I didn't have any more information.

So it was, in that sense, circular.

MR. GOWDY: Well, on that point, you and I agree. I'm still vexed by the word "open," that you wanted to -- because not enough was coming into the open.

MS. FARKAS: Again, Congressman, my concern was that there was something I didn't know, there was something Congress didn't know, certainly that the American people didn't know. And I wanted -- I trusted Congress to be the custodian of that information. And I wanted the administration, the Obama administration, to provide that to Congress, whatever it was or whatever it wasn't.

MR. GOWDY: Dr. Farkas --

MS. FARKAS: But there were too many questions that were unanswered, which led me to fill in the blanks and the media to fill in the blanks.

MR. GOWDY: Well, there weren't that many questions a couple of sentences earlier where you said the Trump staff was dealing with the Russians. That's pretty definitive.

MS. FARKAS: Well, the media was reporting on that. And the Trump staff themselves were --

MR. GOWDY: Here we go back again to the media reports. I mean, they don't need a Russia expert --

MS. FARKAS: Well, these are credible reporters, I know them.

MR. GOWDY: We can't both talk at the same time.

MS. FARKAS: Sorry.

MR. GOWDY: They don't need a Russia expert to go on MSNBC and just parrot back media reports, do they? I mean, any of us can do that.

MS. FARKAS: No, but they need someone with 30 years' experience in the national security/foreign policy field, 20 years in national security. And --

MR. ROONEY: To say what, to say something you didn't know?

MR. GOWDY: And that someone repeatedly used the phrase "we knew."

MS. FARKAS: Because it's based on my expert assessment.

MR. GOWDY: Your expert assessment was wrong, because you just said "we knew" meant you felt.

MS. FARKAS: That's correct.

MR. GOWDY: You didn't know it.

MS. FARKAS: I was maybe wrong, and maybe I was right.

MR. ROONEY: Can I ask you something?

MS. FARKAS: It was my best guess, trying to help people --

MR. GOWDY: But it wasn't a guess.

MS. FARKAS: -- on the outside who don't have information.

MR. GOWDY: That's my point, Dr. Farkas, it wasn't a guess. You said it definitively. You said it on national television. And you --

MS. FARKAS: Because in my gut -- I'm sorry.

MR. GOWDY: Okay. Well, you didn't say that, though. You didn't say: In my gut. You didn't say: I feel. You said: We knew. And you sent the message to the American people that you had information they didn't have and then you looped it back with the leaking, and that's what's problematic for some of us.

I don't mind that you made mistakes on national television. All of us do that. But for you to say that you were concerned that not enough was coming out into the open, and then you said, so that's why we have the leaking, and then you put, ellipsis, people are worried.

Some people are worried about the leaking.

MS. FARKAS: Well, this was a phone interview. I didn't put ellipsis.

MR. GOWDY: No, no, no, you said it right here.

MS. FARKAS: But the Ezra --

MR. HASKELL: We're going back and forth between interviews --

MS. FARKAS: No, no, no, but --

MR. GOWDY: Actually, I'm not. I'm staying right with the MSNBC.

"That's why you have the leaking. People are worried."

Can you see how someone might be thinking that maybe that was an invitation to disseminate classified information, or that it was okay to leak as long as you had really good motives behind it?

MS. FARKAS: I hope not.

MR. GOWDY: Well, I can tell you the reason you are here today is not because you're a Russia expert. It's because I think a reasonable construction of what you said was that you had access to information that the rest of us didn't have and that's what explained the leaking. That's why you're here today.

MR. ROONEY: That's why I thought you were here today too.

MS. FARKAS: Sorry.

MR. ROONEY: And, I mean, I'm not saying that as anything other than -- when you look at evidence that you are trying to get before the jury, that you say something along the lines of, in my 33 years of experience, that qualifies you as somewhat of an expert.

And then you make the kind of statement that says that, I know that there's this information out there and that these things are true, and then they come out. And then when you come here, you say, well, it was more of what I felt.

That's, you know -- I shouldn't have said earlier that this is a waste of all of our time. I don't think it's a waste of all of our time. But I do think that it goes to

show that what's being spun up is nothing more than just hearsay or feelings.

But I want to ask you one more question before I'm done, and that's we've gone sort of -- we've touched this, broached this topic a few times, about what the Obama administration needs to provide information to the American people, to the Hill, that information needs to get out there before he leaves. And I know that there's been frustration even by some members of the Democratic -- our Democratic colleagues that he dropped the ball while he was President in not putting certain information out there.

Do you agree with that? And what information do you think the Obama administration could have put out there that would have been more useful for understanding the Russia intrusion into our election? Jeh Johnson just said last week that, you know, he held back on some information because he thought it would cause more harm than good with regard to the voting.

MS. FARKAS: So my personal view on this -- and I have a lot of respect for President Obama, and he put me in that job, and I fought honestly, you know, for what I thought was right in that job, and it wasn't always what he wanted or what he did.

And had I been in the administration, I would have fought tooth and nail for us to be more public and not to worry about the political consequences, because I believe that we have to keep our eye on the ball. The adversary is Russia. It's not -- it's not the other party. And, unfortunately -- so I think --

MR. ROONEY: Why do you think he did that.

MS. FARKAS: -- if you do the right thing, if you know what the right thing is, which is to speak up when our country is being attacked, you just do it. And yes, there's a risk that people will manipulate that. Yes, there's a risk either way. I

guess I won't go into those scenarios.

MR. ROONEY: What's the risk of manipulate -- why do you think Obama did not do what you wish that he would have done?

MS. FARKAS: I can't speculate. I have elsewhere in closed session said I'm not actually sure. Again, I wasn't in the administration. But knowing what I know about President Obama, I know he was very concerned about escalation. I know that because of all of our deliberations with Susan Rice as his best, you know, voice, if you will, at the table. And I believe that political considerations aside, he was probably afraid that Putin would do something more.

My view is that you have to stand up to Putin in order to get him to stop, that he's less likely to escalate if you take a firm stance. But I understand the rationale, even though I don't agree with it, that taking a firm stance could cause Putin to escalate.

And so I believe that probably President Obama was afraid that the Russians would do something else if he took a firmer -- firmer stance against Russia. And maybe we didn't know what their capabilities are. I don't -- you know, again, I'm not privy to the intel anymore.

BY [REDACTED]

Q All right, ma'am. Well, we're down to the lower end of the trough here with me, so I won't take too much of your time.

If I can take you back to December 2016, when you said you came to the Hill to meet some people in person. If you could just tell me who at the time and the positions they held, who were [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

A [REDACTED] is the -- was at the time the [REDACTED]

██████████ was the ██████████ for the ██████████
██████████ is a ██████████
██████████ And ██████████ also at the time was -- ██████████ sorry,
was -- yeah, ██████████ she's going into the administration now -- was at the time a
██████████

Q And you came up here. Why did you come up here to meet with them?

A Because I trusted them, because I had worked for 7 years on the Senate Armed Services Committee staff with -- with not all of them, but some of them in various capacities -- almost all of them. ██████████ is the only one who hadn't been on the Hill at the time I was on the Hill, I believe. They were all people I knew and respected as professionals, and I knew that -- I believed that they would take the Russia threat seriously.

And I want -- as a professional friend and colleague, I wanted them to -- I have a great deal of respect for the legislative branch. I mean, I'm more of a -- even though my 20 years are now split between executive and legislative, I'm really a legislative creature. And so I believe strongly in what this body can do and in the people who work here, who have worked here for so many years, including those individuals.

And so I felt that I really was only doing it because I'm really passionate about this vision, which I explained. You know, it stems in part from my, you know, being the child of Hungarian immigrants who literally fled here with like a sandwich, in my mother's case a sandwich in her pocket -- my father had different foodstuffs -- and came here because they wanted to come to a country that was not communist, that was democratic, not autocratic, and that had equal opportunity, you know, at the

time.

Q I understand. Getting back --

A Sorry.

Q -- to these folks real quick. I only have 30 seconds left, so -- is there anything in the conversations you had with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] that you haven't disclosed to us today about what you are here to talk to us about?

A No. I told them that they needed to focus on this, for lack of a better way of putting it.

Q But you didn't provide them with any specific ammunition?

A No.

Q That's it, ma'am. Thank you for your time.

BY [REDACTED]

Q [REDACTED] [REDACTED] for the minority. I just wanted to thank you again.

Just very quickly, I just want to reiterate what Ranking Member Schiff said about the importance placed on the work that you do as a commentator in public, and we do hope that this --

A I don't stop.

Q -- does not have the effect of chilling speech or chilling your willingness to draw on your vast experience to speak publicly about matters that are important for the Nation. So we just want to put that on the record.

A Yeah.

Q Secondly, we also just want to underscore that -- also explain to you the bipartisan terms of our investigation.

A Okay. Can I just make a comment on the record? I am worried that

this will be chilling, because I have 20 years government service. I'm not rolling in money.

And, you know, this guy's a very nice young man that I just met today. But if everybody has to do this, you know, I'm fairly confident that I have earning potential, though I don't have a spouse. You know, I have to look out for myself. This is not a pity party. But when I was at a conference recently, you know, this issue came up with people who are Russia hawks, that we can be deterred.

Now, I know that you guys are not trying to have that effect here, but I would also like to get on the record that it is -- it is a real potential concern, and the Russians are probably not unwise to that either.

Okay. Sorry.

Q No, thank you for your comment.

We also just wanted to lay out for your understanding the terms of our unclassified parameters for our investigation, the first being what Russian cyber activity and other active measures were directed against the United States and its allies; the second being did the Russian active measures include links between Russia and individuals associated with political campaigns or any other U.S. person; third, what was the U.S. Government's response to these Russian active measures and what do we need to do to protect ourselves and our allies in the future; and fourth, what possible leaks of classified information took place related to the Intelligence Community assessment of these matters that came out in January.

The reason I wanted to list these was because I think that it is our view that your comments were helpful with regard to some of them. It also reinforces the fact that there are open questions that we're looking into that you have discussed publicly as well. And this is why we, along with the majority, are working on a

bipartisan basis to investigate these matters, because we think it's important for the U.S. national interest.

So I'll conclude there unless there's any more questions on our end.

Okay. Thank you very much.

MS. FARKAS: All right. Thank you. Thank you.

MR. HASKELL: Thank you all.

[Whereupon, at 6:16 p.m., the interview was concluded.]